

Appl. No. 10/631,139
Amdt. Dated September 21, 2005
Reply to Office Action of June 21, 2005

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to Figs. 6 and 7. The sheets replace the original sheets including Figs. 6 and 7.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office Action dated June 21, 2005, claims 6 and 20 were indicated as allowable and claim 1 was rejected. In response, claim 6 has been rewritten in independent form, and claim 1 has been amended. Reconsideration of the claims in view of the amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Drawings:

The drawings have been objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) for failing to show the steering bearing of claim 4. In response Figs. 6 and 7 have been amended to include a reference numeral to the steering bearing. Paragraphs [0024], [0033], and [0035] have been amended to include a reference to the steering bearing 99 as shown in the corrected drawings. Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are attached hereto. In view of these amendments, the Applicants respectfully request that the objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

Section 102 Rejection

Claims 1 – 3 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 102(b) as anticipated by Kemner (U.S. Patent 3,738,441). In response, claim 1 has been amended to more clearly indicate that the steering axis is the axis of rotation of the tiller as the tiller moves in an arc from side to side of the vehicle. This axis selects a direction of motion of the vehicle.

In the Kemner reference, the steering arm or tiller 26 can be rotated in two directions. The first is from side-to-side of the truck. This rotation selects a direction of motion of the wheel 12 and is the equivalent of a “steering axis” as recited in the claims. The second is from the front of the truck to the back of the truck in order to allow the steering arm 26 to be

repositioned to allow the operator of the vehicle to drive the vehicle either from a platform or by walking in front of the vehicle.

In Kemner, the axis of rotation of the steering arm around the “steering axis” as it rotates to drive the wheel 12, is vertical and extends through the center of the power unit 19 and to the wheel 12. The steering axis, therefore, is not offset from vertical as recited in claim 1. Amended claim 1, therefore, differentiates from the cited reference, and the Applicants therefore respectfully request that the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. Section 102 be withdrawn.

In the Action claim 6 was indicated as allowable. In response, a new claim 21 has been added which includes claim 1 and all the elements of claim 6 along with intervening claim 5. New claims 22 – 28, which depend from claim 21, have been added. In view of the amendments, claims 1 – 6, and 20– 28 are believed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 7 – 13, which are presently withdrawn, but which depend from claim 1, are believed to be allowable with the generic parent claim, and the Applicants therefore respectfully request that these claims also be re-entered in the event claim 1 is allowed.


If any issues remain, and a telephone interview would be helpful, the Applicants respectfully request the Examiner contact the undersigned at the telephone number below.

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No fees are believed necessary to enter this response. However, if any fees are necessary, please charge Deposit Account 17-0055.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Toomey

By: 
Terri S. Flynn
Quarles & Brady LLP
Reg. No. 41,756
Attorney for Applicant
411 East Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53202-4497
414/277-5229